Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Canceled)

2. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim [[1]] 5, wherein the sawcut is introduced to a depth (d_1) which is less than the wall thickness (D) of the header tube.

3. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim [[1]] 5, wherein the sawcut is made in a direction parallel to the axis of the header tube.

4. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim [[1]] 5, wherein the sawcut is made in a direction transverse to the axis of the header tube.

5. (Currently Amended) A method ~~as claimed in claim 1~~ for forming at least one flat-tube insertion slot in a heat exchanger header tube suitable for use in an air-conditioning system, comprising:

making a sawcut in the header tube, the sawcut having a first length and a first width; and

configuring the flat-tube insertion slot by punching into the region of the sawcut with a slot punch, the slot punch having at least one of a larger width and larger length relative to the respective first width and first length of the sawcut, to thereby form a rimmed insertion slot having a rim on at least a portion of its periphery extending into the interior of the header tube,

wherein the first width, first length and the width and length of the slot punch are selected such that the rim formed on a first portion of the insertion slot is longer than the rim on at least one second portion of the periphery of the insertion slot.

6. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the rim is longer in the smaller dimension of the insertion slot.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Original) A method for forming at least one flat-tube insertion slot in a heat exchanger header tube suitable for use in an air-conditioning system, comprising:

making a sawcut in the header tube; and

configuring the flat-tube insertion slot by punching into the region of the sawcut with a slot punch, wherein the header tube comprises a multi-chamber header tube having a plurality of adjacent tube passageways separated at a distance from one another by means of respective web region(s), and the flat-tube insertion slot extends transversely over a plurality of the tube passageways, and wherein during the punching, at least a portion of the respective web region(s) is compressed to a level lower than a flat-tube insertion stop, whereby a space connecting at least two of the passageways will be defined upon insertion of a flat tube.

9. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 8, wherein a header-tube wall region forms the flat-tube insertion stop.

10. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 8, wherein the flat-tube insertion stop comprises peripheral wall surfaces on the distal inner walls of the two outermost header-tube passageways.

11. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 8, wherein the flat-tube insertion stop comprises a shoulder-shaped stop surface on each inner wall of the two outermost header-tube passageways, which surfaces are formed during the punching.

12. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 8, wherein the flat-tube insertion stop comprises at least one protrusion which is formed in a web region during the punching.

13. (Canceled)

14. (Currently Amended) A method ~~as claimed in claim 13~~ for forming at least one flat-tube insertion slot in a heat exchanger header tube suitable for use in an air-conditioning system, comprising:

making a sawcut in the header tube, the sawcut having a first length and a first width; and

configuring the flat-tube insertion slot by punching into the region of the sawcut with a slot punch, the slot punch having at least one of a larger width and larger length relative to the respective first width and first length of the sawcut, to thereby form a rimmed insertion slot having a rim on at least a portion of its periphery extending into the interior of the header tube,

wherein the sawcut is substantially linear and has a first length a_1 and a first width b_1, and

wherein the slot punch has a larger length a_2 and a larger width b_2 and at least one of the following is true: the ratio of sawcut length a_1 to slot punch length a_2 is between approximately 0.2 and approximately 0.95; and ~~, and/or~~ the ratio of sawcut width b_1 to slot punch width b_2 is between approximately 0.3 and approximately 0.95.

15. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim [[1]] 5, wherein the header tube has a wall having a comparatively thick wall thickness suitable for use in a heat exchanger subjected to high pressure loading at the level used for systems utilizing CO_2 as a heat exchange agent.

16. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim [[1]] 5, wherein the step of making said sawcut comprises cutting the sawcut with a saw blade having a predetermined diameter and width.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Currently Amended) A method ~~as claimed in claim 17~~ for forming at least one flat-tube insertion slot in a heat exchanger header tube suitable for use in an air-conditioning system, comprising:

making a sawcut in the header tube, wherein the sawcut is introduced to a depth (d_1) which is less than the wall thickness (D) of the header tube; and

configuring the flat-tube insertion slot by punching into the region of the sawcut with a slot punch,

wherein the sawcut is substantially linear and has a first length a_1 and a first width b_1, and

wherein the slot punch has a larger length a_2 and a larger width b_2 and at least one of the following is true: the ratio of sawcut length a_1 to slot punch length a_2 is between approximately 0.2 and approximately 0.95; and ~~, and/or~~ the ratio of sawcut width b_1 to slot punch width b_2 is between approximately 0.3 and approximately 0.95.

19. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim [[7]] 18, wherein the header tube has a wall having a comparatively thick wall thickness suitable for use in a heat exchanger subjected to high pressure loading at the level used for systems utilizing CO_2 as a heat exchange agent.

20. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim [[7]] 18, wherein the step of making said sawcut comprises cutting the sawcut with a saw blade having a predetermined diameter and width.